

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1904

PECK'S BAD BOY ABROAD

How the Bad Boy and His Dad Call on King Edward and Almost Settle the Irish Question.

BY GEORGE W. PECK.

LONDON, England.—Dear Uncle Ezra: The worst is over, and dad and I have both touched a king.

Not the way you think, touching a king for a hand-out, or borrowing his loose change, or even going to touch dad when you had to pay for your goods, but just taking hold of his hand, and shaking it in good old United States fashion.

The American minister arranged it for us. He told somebody that Peck's Bad Boy and his dad were in town, and just wanted to size up a king, and see how he averaged. So he called on the United States politicians, and the king set an hour for us to call.

Well, you'd a ride to see dad fix up. Everybody said, when we showed our card at the hotel, notifying us that we were expected at Marlborough house at such a time, that we would be expected to put on plenty of dog. That is what an American from Kansas, who sells breakfast food, said, and the hotel people said we would be obliged to wear knee breeches, and dancing pumps, and silk coats, and all that kind of rot, and men's turnshirts began to call upon us to take our measure for clothes, but when they told us how much it would cost, dad kicked. He said he had a golf suit he had made in Oshkosh at the time of the tournament, that everyone in Oshkosh said was out of sight, and was good enough for any king, and so he rigged up in it, and I hired a suit at a measure place, and dad hired a coat, kind of red, to go with his golf pants, and socks, and he wore canvas tennis shoes. I looked like a picture out of a fourteenth century book, but dad looked like a clown in a circus. One of the calves made him look as though he had a milk leg, cause the padding would not stay around his calf, and he ought to be, but worked around towards his shin. We went to Marlborough house in a hansom cab, and all the way there, dad was looking down from the hurricane deck, through the scuttle hole, to see if we were there yet, and he must have talked with other cab drivers, for every driver kept about us, we looked at us and laughed, as though we were a wild west show.

On the way to the king's residence it was all I could do to keep dad braced up to go through the ordeal. He was brave enough before we got the invitation, and told what he was going to say to the king, and you would think he wasn't afraid of anybody, but when we got nearer to the house, and hung on Tyburn Tree, as I used to read about in my history of Sixteen-String Jack and other English highwaymen. Dad didn't want to see the family disgrace, so he let the cab man drive on, but he said if he got out of this alive, he would indulge me in.

Well, old man, it is like having an operation for appendicitis—you feel better when you come out from under the influence of the chloroform, and the doctor shows you what they took out of you, and you feel that you are going to live, but when you get up, and find a verminiform appendix. We were driven into a sort of Central park, and up to a building that was big as a lot of excellent buildings, and the servants took us in charge and walked us through long rooms covered with pictures as big as side show pictures at a circus, but instead of snake charmers and snakes, and wild men of Borneo, and sword swallowers, the king's pictures were about war, and women without much clothes on from the belt up. Gosh, but some of those pictures made you think you could hear the roar of battle and small gun powder, and dad acted as though he wanted to get right down on the marble floor and dig a rifle pit big enough to get into.

They walked us around like they do when you are being initiated into a secret society, only they didn't sing. "Here comes the lobster," and "and you with a dried bladder." The servants that were conducting us laughed. I had never seen an Englishman laugh, and it was the most interesting thing I saw in London. Most Englishmen look sorry about something, as though some dear friend died every day, and their faces seem to have grown that way. So when they laugh it seems as though the wrinkles would stay there, unless they treated their faces with massage. They were laughing at dad's dislocated calf, and his scared appearance, as though he was going to receive the thirty-second degree, and didn't know whether they were going to throw him over a precipice or pull him up to the roof by the hind legs. We passed a big hall clock, and it struck just when we were near it, and of all the "hark from the tombs" sounds I ever heard, that clock took the cake. Dad thought it sounded like a death knell, and he would have welcomed the turning in of a fire alarm as a sound that meant life everlasting, beside that doleful sound.

After we had marched about three miles, and passed the chairs of the seated before he gets home, if it takes every dollar our government has got, I think he is going to work the hand ratchet when we get to Turkey, but, by ginner, he can leave me in a convent, because I don't want one of those crooked sabers run into me and turned around like a corker. Dad says I can stay in a harem while he goes to the mountains with the bandits, and I

don't know as I care, as they say a harem is the most interesting place in Turkey. You know the pictures we have studied in the old grocery, where a whole bunch of beautiful women are practicing using soap in a marble bath. Well, don't you say anything to me about it, but dad has got his foot in it clear up to the top button. It isn't any thing scandalous, though there is a woman at the bottom of it. You see, I used to know a girl that left home like a lobster, and I think he is a lobster, anyway, and he was going to make dad stop talking, but the duke didn't know dad, and he continued.

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Ready to See King Edward.



The King and Dad Have an Affecting Time.



Dad Went Over Backwards and Struck on His Golf Pants.

Says dad, says he: "I know a rich old man in the states who made ten million dollars on pickles, or breakfast food, and he had a daughter that was so money they couldn't keep a clock going in the house."

"She came over here and got exposed to a duke, and she had never been vaccinated, and the first her father knew she caught the duke and came home, and he followed her. Say, he didn't know enough to pound sand, and the duke thought he was the duke, and sent them off, and the duke covered his castle with building paper, so it would hold water, and they set up housekeep-

ing with a hundred servants. Then the duke wanted a racing stable, after the lady came, and the old pickle man like a lobster, and I think he is a lobster, anyway, and he was going to make dad stop talking, but the duke didn't know dad, and he continued.

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Gee, but dad found her, and she ain't any more of a duchess than I am. Her husband is a younger son of a titled person, but there isn't money enough in the whole family to buy a gun, and our poor girl is working in a shop, or store, selling corsets to support a lady, frankin, husband and a whole mess of children, and while she is seven removes from a duchess, she does not rank with the women who washes her mother's clothes at home. Gosh, but dad was hot when he found her, and after she told him about her situation in life he gave her a yellow-backed \$50 bill, and came back to the hotel mad as a cut snake, and went to the hotel where, where else, where he didn't know any titled persons.

That night a couple of dukes came around to the hotel to sell dad some stock in a diamond mine in South Africa, and they got to talking about how English society held over our crude American society, until dad got an addition to the mad he had when he called on our girl, and when one of the dukes said America was being helped socially by the marriage of American women to titled persons, dad got a hot box, like a stalled freight train.

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